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“Intimations of Devotion”
A Senior Honors Voice Recital

A Senior Honors Thesis in the Department of Music
Sweet Briar College

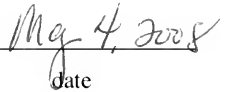
by Erin L. Rogers

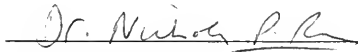
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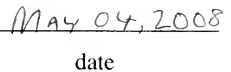
Prof. Marcia Jones Thom
Sweet Briar College

Thesis Project Faculty Advisor


date



Prof. Nicholas P. Ross
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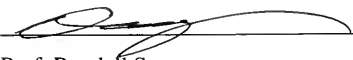
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date

Prof. Nicholas P. Ross
Sweet Briar College

date



Prof. Randall Speer
Randolph College

4/2/08

date

*The Great Bear College Music Department
and Honors Program present*

A SENIOR HONORS VOICE RECITAL:

INTIMATIONS OF
DEVOTION

ERIN ROGERS

soprano

with

ANNA BILLIAS, piano

&

JANA ROSS, viola

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 7:30 PM.

MEMORIAL CHAPEL

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Introduction

Whatever a student singer conceives “the recital” to be, it is definitely more. In its purest and most traditional form, I have learned that the recital is an acid test of any singer’s musical capabilities.

I chose to give an honors voice recital because I wanted to challenge myself, not only to see how far I could go in my specific vocal studies, but also to serve as the culmination of my vocal performance studies as an undergraduate student. The preparations for this performance began over a year ago when I started thinking about the content of the recital. I quickly learned that building a recital can be an art form with a long history of scholarship and performance. Preparing and giving a student recital is a process that, I believe, has helped me to learn about the history and artistry of recital, while understanding more about my own voice and abilities. The process has also led me be very excited about my program, as well as this versatile and fascinating genre. While song recitals may not be as popular as they once were in the early twentieth-century, there is an abundance of music to be appreciated in a seemingly endless collection of song composition.

The title, “Intimations of Devotion,” was chosen after the program was constructed. I found myself focusing on the impressions of devotion more than anything else as I thought about the music and texts. Many of them may seem simply romantic in nature, however, the complexity or powerful simplicity of each narrative directly reflects the composer’s ability to dramatize words through the music. These program notes present the research I’ve conducted since I began my thesis project. I hope that they provide a useful tool to experiencing the music of this program, and bring a greater understanding of the composers’ intentions through the unity of the voice and piano.

Program

I.

From *Arianna* (1608)

Lasciatemi morire!
(Rimuccini)

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI
(1567-1643)

II.

From *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786)
(Lorenzo da Ponte)

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
(1756-1791)

"Porgi, amor" (Contessa)

III.

From *Sei Ariette da Camera* (1829)
(P. Metastasio)

VINCENZO BELLINI
(1801-1835)

Almen se non poss'io, no. 4
Per pietà, bell'idol mio, no. 5
Ma rendi pur contento, no. 6

IV.

From *Acht Gedichte aus 'Letzte Blätter'*, Op. 10 (1885)
(H. von Gilm)

RICHARD STRAUSS
(1864-1949)

Allerseelen, no 8
Die Nacht, no. 3
Zueignung, no. 1

Intermission

V.

From *Poème d'amour* (1878)
(P. Biquet)

JULES MASSENET
(1842-1912)

Ouvre tes yeux bleus, no. 3

From *Les érunnyes* (1866)
(L. Gallet)

Élégie, Op. 10, no. 5

From *Deux Romances, Poésies de Paul Bourget* (1891)
(P. Bourget)

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862-1918)

Romance: L'âme évaporée

Jana Ross, violin

VI.

From *Childhood Fables for Grownups* (1959)
(G. Norman)

IRVING FINE
(1914-1962)

Polaroli, to Arthur Berger

Tigeroo, to Harold Shapero

Lenny the Leopard, to Leonard Bernstein

VII.

From *Gunn Schuchti* (1918)
(G. Forzano)

GIACOMO PUCCINI
(1858-1924)

"O mio bambino caro" (Lauretta)

Program Notes



From *Arianna*

Lasciatemi morire!

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI

Born May 15, 1567, Cremona, Italy

Died November 29, 1643, Venice



"Lasciatemi morire" provides an interesting example of opera's origins. It is the only surviving work, among a small number of other fragments, from Monteverdi's third opera, *Arianna*,¹ first performed in 1608. In some ways it exemplifies an early aria; yet, it has assumed a place in the song repertoire, and its operatic origins are virtually forgotten today. It is the lament of the opera's title character, Ariadne, after she has been deserted by Theseus on the island of Naxos. The piece apparently moved listeners of the seventeenth century to tears, a response which gives contemporary historians reason to regard the monodic composition as a genuine, and triumphant, representation of the power of ancient music.²

The text for the opera was written by Ottavio Rinuccini, who also contributed the texts of other contemporary operas, notably Peri's *Dafne* of 1598 and *Euridice* of 1600. Given the artistic objectives of early opera to imitate ancient Greek dramatic expression, inspiration for the texts appropriately came from Greek and Roman mythology. The opera begins with a Prologue sung by Apollo, followed by a scene in which Venus and Cupid discuss the situation they see before them. Due to warring between Athens and Crete, Athenians have been made to sacrifice "seven youths and seven maidens" on a yearly basis by order of Minos, King of Crete. They are sent to be devoured by the Minotaur—a part bull, part man monster—who is kept in a labyrinth near Minos' palace. Theseus, Prince of Athens, has volunteered to kill the monster and eventually does, with the help of Minos' daughter, Ariadne, who has fallen in love with him.³ Ariadne provides him with a sword and a thread to fight the Minotaur and escape the

labyrinth. When Theseus leaves Crete, he takes her with him and allows her to believe that she will become his wife. He decides, though, to abandon Ariadne on the rocky island of Naxos, having already become tired of her. Venus and Cupid speculate upon this awful scene and agree that a remedy is in order. Ariadne awakes to find Theseus gone and her fears confirmed by a chorus of fishermen. It is at this time that she begins her lament. As she resolves to die, her timely attendant, Dorilla, turns her attention toward a coming ship, assuming it to be Theseus returning. Yet, at this point, Ariadne is not interested in seeing him again. The ship, however, instead carries Bacchus who, due to the intervention of Venus and Cupid, falls immediately in love with Ariadne and invites his bride “to the eternal sky.”⁴ In this way Ariadne has experienced a transformation from her mortality—emphasized in the relationship with Theseus—into a fuller expression of her immortal inheritance as the granddaughter of Helios, the sun god, which is emphasized in her union with the god Bacchus.

Though the earliest surviving operas were not written by Monteverdi, his works are looked upon as the first great examples of early opera achieving its intended purpose.⁵ The earliest operatic examples, such as Peri and Rinuccini’s *Euridice* of 1600, did not endeavor to become classics. They were among the principal experiments of the members of the Florentine Camerata⁶ who sought to “put into practice their humanistic ideas about the power of music.”⁷ Their intent was to imitate the supposed style of Greek and Roman tragedies, which meant for words to be sung rather than spoken.

Monteverdi served as a composer to the ruling house of his native Mantua during the early period of his career. Opera found a home as much in Mantua as in Florence, and it was here that *Arianna* was first performed as the highlight of the marriage festivities of Francesco Gonzaga, the Prince of Mantua, and Margherita di Savoia on May 28, 1608.⁸ For the royal courts of Mantua and Florence, the presentation of opera reflected wealth and advanced cultural achievement. So, commissioning an opera from Monteverdi and Rinuccini was an effective way for Duke Gonzaga to present himself and his court to his new family, the House of Savoy. From contemporary accounts the opera was an immense success and, judging by the excellence of Arianna’s ‘Lament,’ the loss of the complete score is a great misfortune in the history of opera.⁹



From *Le nozze di Figaro*

“Porgi, amor”

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Born January 27, 1756, Salzburg

Died December 5, 1791, Vienna



Mozart begins the second act of *Le nozze di Figaro* with the introduction of the Countess Almaviva in her opening aria, “Porgi amor” (Bestow, Love). The simultaneous placement of a principal character’s first appearance with an important and celebrated aria is unusual, but partly accounts for the long instrumental introduction. It immediately serves as “the exalted and noble portrait of the Countess, who enters as though from another world.”¹⁰

A simple binary *cavatina*,¹¹ the music communicates the complex feelings of the Countess, who is tormented by her husband’s ever-failing fidelity and growing indifference toward her. Before the text even begins, Mozart presents the state of her emotions through the juxtaposition of contrasting musical motifs in the introduction. These motifs describe the Countess’ superficial tranquility and the frustration that she cannot suppress. Yet, in Mozartian fashion, they are concise and contained within the primary tonality, showing Mozart’s ability to express different feelings while maintaining the unity of one key.¹² The intensity of these feelings rises until the climactic moment preceding the second half of the aria, when the Countess’ appeal to the God of Love swells up to the A flat (‘o mi lascia almen morir’). Though the strophe is repeated, the second half of the aria illustrates another aspect of her resolve and earnest nature through the music’s distinctly different and eloquent writing. The section begins with the punctuated phrasing of ‘Porgi, amor, quale che ristoro,’ and the directness of a woman who is both deeply affected, yet practical and capable enough to accept the challenge of winning back her husband’s love.

Background of *Drama*

It has only been three years since the young Rosina was able to marry and become the Countess Almaviva.¹³ A woman now in her early twenties, she is already lonely and unhappy, believing she has lost her husband's interest. "She fears that he no longer loves her, for not only has he been pursuing the gardener's little daughter, Barbarina, but he has been making more persistent advances to his wife's maid, Susanna, promising her a dowry if she will submit to his desires. Susanna, the epitome of virtue and proper behavior, does not intend to gratify the Count. This is the day of her wedding to Figaro (the Count's former valet) and she hopes that somehow she can circumvent the Count without making him so angry that he will not permit the marriage to take place. The opening sentence of the conversation between the Countess and Susanna that immediately follows this aria makes it clear that the Countess has been informed of the situation before the curtain opens on the second act."¹⁴

The Setting

The act opens in the sitting room of the Countess' apartments. The room is adjoined by the room of her maid, Susanna, who has told the Countess of the Count's attempts to seduce her. It is the early afternoon and the Countess is alone, still in her negligee, trying to suppress her thoughts of the Count. He has planned to go hunting, and she hopes, but correctly doubts, that he will come and kiss her goodbye before leaving.

The Composer, the Librettist, and the Opera

Le nozze di Figaro is based on the comedic play *Le mariage de Figaro, ou La folle journée* by French playwright Pierre Beaumarchais. The comedy achieved marked success after its premiere at the Comédie-Française in Paris on April 27, 1784, partly as a result of the circumstances preceding the first performance.¹⁵ The play had been read by Louis XVI and was suppressed for being "detestable," undoubtedly due to central and suggestive roles given to the characters of the story's servant class. However, within a few years, Beaumarchais was able to stir enough aristocratic and public interest to force the King to comply with popular demand and to allow the play to be performed.

Beaumarchais' artistic influence and notoriety had already been established by previous works, including *Le barbier de Séville* (*The Barber of Seville*), premiered in 1775, which was the first of three plays written with a continuing plot. *Le mariage de Figaro* would later become the second of these three, followed by *La mère coupable* (*The Guilty Mother*). Thirty years later, Rossini, the great Italian Bel Canto composer, would premiere his opera based upon *Le barbier de Séville*—now known as *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Beaumarchais' mastery over intrigue comes to its pinnacle in this work, and with the genius of Mozart as its dramatist, *Le nozze di Figaro* has become one of the most revered masterpieces of the operatic repertoire. The opera's action, which is largely directed by the non-aristocratic characters of Figaro

(former valet), Susanna (maid), and Cherubino (page), emphasizes the importance of servants in the life of a stately household. This is a purposeful and cunning choice of plot, which underscores the social changes underway and the imminent revolution in France. However, in keeping with comedy, the threat of violence will never escalate beyond domestic chaos and turmoil.

This also marks the first alliance of Mozart with his well-known librettist, Lorenzo da Ponte, who would also write libretti for Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787) and *Così fan tutte* (1790). Da Ponte had been the court poet to Joseph II in Vienna, during which time he was also librettist to Antonio Salieri. Not long after a fallout with Salieri, the writer found the opportunity to work with Mozart. In 1790, after the death of the emperor and an unwelcome dismissal, Da Ponte left Vienna. He then worked in London for sometime, before leaving once again pursued by creditors. By 1805 he arrived in America and occupied himself by working as a grocer, general merchant, a private teacher, and dealer of Italian books. He also held a chair in Italian at Columbia University in 1825, and again from 1827 until his death in 1838.¹⁶ By the majority of accounts, Da Ponte was an ambitious man whose arrogance and unscrupulous character were much to blame for many of his life's unfortunate events.¹⁷ Though he was not known to have a poet's skill for creativity or artistry, he was an intelligent and productive businessman whose drive led him to success in writing libretti often based on the stories and ideas of other writers.

Mozart was already well known to Europe as a child prodigy and composer by the time of *Le nozze di Figaro*. He had written many operas by this point, two of which succeeded in establishing him as not only a brilliant composer of symphonic music, but also of opera, which is an infrequent achievement. When Mozart was thirty years old, *Le nozze* became the most popular of his operas and the first of his three famous *opera buffe*, which also included *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*. Though it did not win overwhelming affection at its premiere in Vienna, its subsequent triumph in Prague led to its acceptance and praise throughout Europe. In it Mozart presents a remarkable balance between music and drama, surpassing the outmoded models of the earlier eighteenth century. Action is continuous, characterizations are complex, and the ensemble writing is of a kind never seen before. It is a work which led opera, particularly *opera buffa*, into a new period of creative possibility.¹⁸ As one scholar writes:

He overtopped his predecessors not by a changed approach to opera but by the superior beauty, originality, and significance of his musical ideas, by his greater mastery of counterpoint, by his higher constructive powers, and by his ability to write music that not only perfectly portrayed a dramatic situation but also could develop freely in a musical sense, without appearing to be in the least hampered by the presence of a text.¹⁹



From *Sei Ariette da Camera*

Almen se non poss'io, no. 4
Per pietà, bell'idol mio, no. 5
Ma rendi pur contento, no. 6

VINCENZO BELLINI

Born November 3, 1801, Catania, Italy

Died September 23, 1835, Puteaux, France



Born to a musical family in Catania, Sicily, Bellini began his studies at a very early age, composing an aria by the age of six. His interest in opera grew while in Naples, where he continued his studies after receiving a scholarship at seventeen. His early operas, such as *Il Pirata* (1827) written for La Scala, led him to receive more commissions from the great Italian opera house.

Along with Gioacchino Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti, Bellini came to be one of the defining operatic composers of the Bel Canto period, referring to the early nineteenth-century style of Italian opera as one emphasizing "beautiful singing." Bellini was the least prolific of the three, but also the most short-lived. He died at the age of thirty-three, having composed only ten operas, the most

famous of which are perhaps *La sonnambula* and *Norma* (both in 1830). The relatively small size of his output owes to Bellini's slow composition pace, which was a result of his dedication to the quality of his libretti and the unity of the text and the music.

The composer wrote the three pieces from the second half of his *Sei Ariette* (Six Little Songs) in 1829, during a period of contentment and increasing prosperity in his career. His songs for voice and piano are also relatively few in number, but they are consistent examples of Bellini's style; an elegant portrayal of drama through melody and a belief in expression through agility. For text, he chose the poetry of Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782), a poet and librettist whose works were also set to music by countless other composers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The songs in this set follow their published order, though it is not clear whether or not the original poetry from Metastasio was organized in the same way.

Sei ariette di camera is dedicated to Marianna Pollini, who was a maternal figure to Bellini. She and her husband, Francesco, an elderly couple living in Milan, were introduced to Bellini by a mutual friend and treated Bellini like their son when he went to Milan in 1827. Their relationship remained close for the rest of his life. It was Madame Pollini who not only took care of the composer when he was ill, but introduced him to Giuditta Turina, the woman considered Bellini's greatest love.²⁰



From *Acht Gedichte aus 'Letzte Blätter,'* Opus 10

Allerseelen, no. 8

Die Nacht, no. 3

Zueignung, no. 1

RICHARD STRAUSS

Born June 11, 1864, Munich

Died September 8, 1949, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany

Though Strauss had written several songs very early in his life, the eight lieder of Opus 10 are commonly regarded as the vocal compositions which marked the beginning of his highly successful lieder-writing career. The composer was twenty-one years old at the time of the set's publication, but began his compositions at the age of eighteen.²¹ His choice to use the poetry of Austrian Hermann von Gilm zu Rosengg (1812-1864), whose works were well known in Germany, seemed to coincide with his discovery of a formula to write lieder.²² The three-section approach, clearly based on the structure of the poems, is seen in the first lied of the published set, "Zueignung," as in its last, "Allerseelen," and takes a different form in "Die Nacht."



The majestic "Allerseelen" recalls in its poem, as well as in its music, the Romantic period of Germanic composition. One of the most striking and sentimental compositions of Opus 10, it is a piece that invokes the bittersweet memory of a love that is dead, but not gone. The

key is E flat major, though it seems to be in minor, as the music communicates tranquility and hope along with feelings of profound loss. The title refers to the second of November, when all souls are free from the limits of death for one day. In 1904, one year after its first recording, "Allerseelen" became Strauss' earliest lied to be arranged and appear in print.²³ In the early 1930's, it was also one of his first works to be arranged for orchestral accompaniment, a practice which departs from the artistic tradition of lieder, but which was supported by Strauss in this and a few other instances.²⁴ Though lieder is an art form composed specifically for voice and piano, there were also later examples of works by Strauss, which he orchestrated himself. It is the only poem of Opus 10 that was set by another composer, and it has been one of the most widely known and performed of all Strauss lieder.²⁵ After his death, his wife Pauline, who sang professionally in her youth, requested that three of his most famous lieder be sung at his funeral; "Allerseelen" was the first among them.²⁶

Strauss' skillful ability to bring text into full realization through the use of the voice and piano as instruments is most extraordinarily expressed in "Die Nacht." It is a vivid portrayal of day sinking into night's shadow and a work of deceptive simplicity. Forest and night are highly popular subjects in German Romanticism and often used in the setting of lieder. Here the setting is seen through the subdued andantino in 3/4 time of "Die Nacht." The vision of night stepping lightly through the forest, stealing all in her path while gaining more surety in her steps, is conveyed as a new part is added to each measure's counterpoint, enriching the texture as "she" continues to overtake the forest.²⁷ The key changes, though simple, are also significant as the song comes to a close and a B flat is added on 'näher,' moving the key from D major to D minor, increasing the threat of the moment. The change on the last word, 'auch,' from D major to B flat major, along with the rolled chords of the accompaniment, signal the importance of this word as it impresses the last moments of anguish. The threat is near and the outcome uncertain, as the next four chords alternate between D and B flat until finally resolving in the last chord to the original key of D, indicating that all is safe and not lost.

"Zueignung," meaning "Dedication," is the only work from Opus 10 which is not based on text from Von Gilm's *Letzte Blätter*, or Last Leaves. Since Von Gilm had left it untitled, the young composer titled it himself when he set out to compose this first work of the collection. Its immense popularity from the time of its publication to the present day has been as consistent as that of "Allerseelen," and has contributed to it becoming a well-used finale in many recital programs. Furthermore, in 1898, 'Zueignung' became the first of his songs to be documented as a recording, and by 1972 the lied had been featured on no fewer than 78 recordings, with 'Allerseelen' following with 53.²⁸ In C major, the song is a simple setting for the text, yet brilliantly written to fully communicate gratitude. Strauss begins each of the three verses with four measures written in the same way, but varies the last and most important words, 'habe Dank' to reflect the emotion. In the first verse, 'habe Dank' comes thoughtfully after a pause, during

which time there is a cadence in A minor. The second time, with a move into F major, thanks comes immediately and without pause as both the memory and the feelings swell in intensity. This leads to the impassioned climax in both voice and piano to 'heilig,' or 'holy', referring to the transformation that has left everything changed. It is supported by a quick progression through F major, E minor, and A minor, until the accompaniment resolves itself into C major before the voice returns in its exultant and final 'habe Dank!' ²⁹

Written to be sung by the soprano or tenor voice, these lieder helped to effectively establish Strauss as a serious composer and led to his burgeoning recognition as Germany's most important composer since Wagner and Brahms.



From *Poème d'amour*

Ouvre tes yeux bleus, no. 3

From *Les érinnyes*, *Tristesse Du Soir*

Mélodie-Élégie, Op. 10, no. 5

JULES MASSENET

Born May 12, 1842, Montaud, St. Etienne, France

Died August 13, 1912, Paris

The musical phrasing of "Ouvre tes yeux bleus" contains the same charm and graceful elegance that appears throughout all of Massenet's works, including his operas. The song is unusually separated into two principal sections by the dialogue between two lovers in the early hours of the morning. The urbane sensuality of the piece is a trait often found in Massenet's writing and one which contributed to his establishment as one of the most fashionable and popular composers in late nineteenth-century France. Composed in 1878, the same year he was appointed as a professor at the Parisian Conservatoire, the song was the third of six in the group, *Poème d'amour*, based on the poetry of Paul Robiquet (1848-1928).

Though he was undoubtedly the most beloved composer of French audiences, Massenet was not always the most respected of his colleagues. His melodies are lyrical and attractive in quality, his style eloquent, and his use of instrumental color is compared by some to rich watercolors or a Renoir.³⁰ Yet, his attention to public taste and his standing as a descendent of the Gounod tradition in French music, rather than the more progressive movement of Saint-Saëns, led to criticism from contemporary intellectuals. He continued, however, to become one of the most prosperous composers of his generation. Today he is perhaps most known for his opera, *Manon*.

"Élégie" was one of the first pieces that garnered the composer international fame. Its interesting, and somewhat confusing, history began in 1866, when the composer was only twenty-two years old. It was originally composed as a solo piano piece, one of his *Dix Pieces* for piano. In 1872, the work appeared in a different form as part of the incidental music for Leconte de Lisle's *Les érinnyes* (The Furies), a 'tragédie



antique,' which became the first public showing of Massenet's abilities as a composer. What was to become known as the 'Mélodie-Élégie' was written in this context as a violoncello solo accompanying Electra's libation to the grave of her dead father, Agamemnon.³¹ Among his output, its fame in subsequent years was matched only by his "Méditation," the violin solo taken from the entr'acte of his opera *Thaïs* of 1894. By 1885 it was published as 'Mélodie-Élégie,' and shortly after Massenet adapted the text of Louis Gallet (1835-1898), making it into a work for voice and piano. Gallet had also been one of Massenet's most enduring librettists for his operas, so it was not surprising for Massenet to adapt his text to the 'Mélodie'.³²

From Deux Romances, Poésies de Paul Bourget

Romance: L'âme évaporée

(ACHILLE-) CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Born August 22, 1862, St. Germain-en-Laye, France

Died March 25, 1918, Paris



Debussy at the piano, in front of Ernest Chausson, 1893

Judging by their careers and compositional output, Massenet and Debussy are as different as the two eras of French music they represent. However, while Claude Debussy was studying at the Conservatoire as a young man, he was in Massenet's class for composition.³³ As a student, he was considered recalcitrant in the eyes of most of his professors and possessed with originality in the eyes of a few. Indeed, Debussy would later be the source of resounding change and influence in the musical world. However, one can sometimes find a touch of Massenet's style—so popular with the public—in

the music of Debussy's early career. This period of his life preceded his experiences with the Javanese gamelan music brought through the Universal Exhibition of 1889 or with Richard Wagner's music and ideas, which would envelope French cultural discussion.

"Romance," which is followed by "Les cloches" (The Bells) in the two song set *Deux Romances*, was written in 1885, when the composer was in his early twenties. The date of its completion is sometimes confused with the date of its publication, 1891, but precedes this year in its style and in its relationship to

Debussy's output of the early 1890's. Written one year before the eighth and last Impressionist Exhibition, one could say that this piece seems to hold traces of the Impressionistic influences felt in France at the time. The song was among the last of those written before he experienced one of his greatest, personal compositional shifts, which yielded the *Fêtes galantes* (1), published the year after 'Romance.' Debussy's choice of poetry for these works also differed greatly; he chose Paul Bourget's (1852-1935) graceful poetry for *Deux Romances* and Paul Verlaine's suggestive symbolism for his later *Fêtes galantes*. His life-long attention to the meaning and linguistic characteristics of text is evident in 'Romance,' with its declamatory phrases and sweeping passages.



From *Childhood Fables for Grownups*

Polaroli, no. 1, to Arthur Berger

Tigeroo, no. 2, to Harold Shapero

Lenny the Leopard, no. 3, to Leonard Bernstein

IRVING FINE

Born December 3, 1914, Boston

Died August 23, 1962, Boston



Irving Fine's *Childhood Fables for Grownups* is a cycle of six songs composed in two sections and dedicated to six particular friends and colleagues. A composer of great ability and immense promise, Fine died at the age of forty-seven from a heart attack.³⁴ He had attended Harvard and studied with composer Walter Piston, along with the group of colleagues referred to in the first three songs—all of whom had been his long-time friends and fellow students. They have been called the “Boston Neoclassicists,” while Fine, Berger, and Shapero are also among a small group that composer Aaron Copland described as the “Stravinsky School” of American composers.³⁵ Each of them either studied or taught at the Berkshire Music Center, now known as Tanglewood, and became colleagues together at

Brandeis University through Fine's administrative direction and invitations at one time or another. After graduation from Harvard, Fine went to Paris to continue his composition studies for a year with the celebrated teacher, Nadia Boulanger, following her request. “A pastiche of imitations,” these songs contain multiple levels of meaningful expression. The balance of the text and the music is found through the juxtaposition of Gertrude Norman's light-hearted, even silly, children's poetry with the quite ‘grownup,’ or adult music of the composer imitating his friends.³⁶ Further, each piece not only acts as a small portrait of the dedicatee, but also of his musical idiom.

“Polaroli” makes a tongue-in-cheek comparison of Arthur Berger to a polar bear, complete with the suggestiveness of twelve-tone writing in the piano introduction and proto-serialism, a phase of Berger's early writing, in the voice's leaping phrases.³⁷ The use of triplets illustrates the easily twisting movement of the bear and the use of the “sh” sound to emphasize the splashing effects.³⁸ Fine's wife Verna “noted that this song ‘is, I think, more a musical joke than a text joke. The music makes fun, in a warm, loving way, of Arthur's music. It hops, skips and jumps, just as Arthur's music hops, skips and jumps. Arthur

is fastidious, doesn't exercise and is not athletic, so the text is ironic."³⁹



Irving Fine with composer and mentor, Aaron Copland, Brandeis University, 1961.

Referring to "Tigeroo," dedicated to Harold Shapero, Fine said this song, "really works." It is one of the six songs that incorporates a dialogue related by the narrator while the piano communicates a vivaciousness along with neo-classical elements. Like the beginning and end of "Polaroli," Fine writes "a dissonant march reminiscent of Prokofiev" for the Tiger's angry retort to the Keeper. Verna remarked about this piece that "Irving was going to do something very Beethoven, to make fun of Harold, but he decided that would be too obvious. He felt the text suited Harold, who can be I'll-gobble-you-up ugly, but whose bark is much worse than his bite. Like Harold, the tiger had problems and complications, and kept people at a distance."⁴⁰

A caricature of Leonard Bernstein was another matter. Verna recollected that "when Irving played 'Lenny the Leopard' for Bernstein, Lenny said, in his over-dramatic fashion, 'Oh my god, that's my whole life story in one poem!' He always had a problem about wanting to be loved, wanting the world to love him."⁴¹ Fine succeeded in achieving this accurate portrayal using the triplet motion, asymmetric rhythms, and Latin American meters, which he knew Bernstein enjoyed using as well, along with the strong presence of emotional and dramatic effects so familiar in his nature.⁴² There are piano solo passages in this piece that could possibly refer to Bernstein's notable skills as a pianist. The complex music written for the piano accompaniment throughout the entire set does much to communicate the messages within the pieces, not surprisingly given the composer's background as an accomplished pianist.



From *Gianni Schicchi*

“O mio babbino caro”

GIACOMO PUCCINI

Born December 22, 1858, Lucca, Italy

Died November 29, 1924, Brussels



The aria “O mio babbino caro” has become hugely popular as a concert work, while the opera from which it stems is now seldom staged. As a result, audiences have often lost the context of this work; it is a satirical expression of a young daughter’s attempt to persuade her father, rather than a full-blown outpouring of sentiment. She is concerned she will not be able to marry, and in a moment of desperation and high emotions—as is often true in opera—Lauretta sings her aria to her father, *Gianni Schicchi*.

Setting

Set in Florence in 1299, Schicchi and his twenty-one-year-old daughter enter the house of Buoso Donati, recently deceased. He has been called to the scene by one of the young family members, Gherardino, who suspects he can be of assistance.

Earlier, after Buoso’s relations gather around the dead man lying in bed, they mount a frenzied search throughout the house for the will. After finding the will, the twenty-four-year-old Rinuccio asks his Aunt Zita for permission to marry Lauretta as a reward for finding the document. Zita, however, is not to be distracted—especially concerning a girl with no origins or family tree—while the will remains unread. The family finds, to their deep distress, that Buoso has left his considerable wealth to the monks, as was rumored.

Rinuccio brilliantly suggests that Gianni Schicchi, with all his cunning and resourceful tendencies, is the only person who can help them. Since he represents the same low-class and country society as his daughter, the family is infuriated by the mention of his name. Rinuccio sings his aria, ‘Firenze è come un albero fiorito,’ in reply, referring to Florence’s humble, yet still noble, roots in the countryside. The music of the aria contains a phrase which will later grow into Lauretta’s aria.

Schicchi then arrives and is apprised of the situation. Commenting that they are disinherited, the affronted Zita orders Schicchi and his daughter out of the house, refusing her nephew permission to

marry a girl of such insignificance. Schicchi explosively retorts and accuses Zita of being “the snobbish money-grabbing old hag, who would sacrifice young people’s happiness to her own greed.” An ensemble ensues and Rinuccio tries to stop Schicchi (without many signs of success) from leaving without even looking at the will. Lauretta now sings her aria (O my beloved daddy), which has expanded upon the phrase in Rinuccio’s aria (though it is now in A flat, rather than B flat). It is an aria written in a simple sectional form, with more harmonic than chromatic writing. Puccini’s skill for creating beautiful lyricism simultaneously with comedy is achieved in this piece and is best understood within the context of the humorous opera.

Schicchi is persuaded and, after some thought, creates a plan to impersonate Buoso since no one outside the family knows of his death. He explains to the family how they will call for the lawyer in the morning on his behalf, with the intent to make a new will. Several members of the family then try to bribe him into treating them favorably with the inheritance.

The following morning when the lawyer arrives, Schicchi as Buoso orders an inexpensive funeral and something modest for each family member to inherit, while the villa, sawmills, and mule go to “his devoted friend, Gianni Schicchi,”⁴³ After the lawyer departs, Schicchi chases the now violent, but powerless, family out of the house as Lauretta and Rinuccio sing of the happy future they will now have together. Schicchi then turns and addresses the audience: “Could you imagine a better use for Buoso’s money? ... if you have enjoyed yourselves this evening, I trust you will applaud a verdict of “Extenuating Circumstances.”⁴⁴

The Composer, the Librettist, and the Opera

In *Gianni Schicchi*, Puccini composed what can be viewed as the last *opera buffa*⁴⁵ written in the spirit of the great eighteenth-century Italian tradition. It is the final work of *Il trittico*, the series of three one-act operas composed together and first performed at the Metropolitan Opera in December of 1918. Of the three, *Gianni Schicchi* immediately became the most popular and, being written in his later period, finally fulfilled the composer’s longing “to laugh and make others laugh.”⁴⁶ The political climate also contributed to its success, for with the increased nationalism resulting from World War I, a lighthearted *opera buffa* recalling the great Italian tradition of previous eras, was easily praised and enjoyed. Critical reviews compared it to Verdi’s final opera and comedic masterpiece *Falstaff*, which had achieved great fame after its premiere twenty-five years earlier.

Il tabarro and *Suor Angelica* are now not as frequently performed and even less frequently performed in their unified form with *Gianni Schicchi*. Originally, Puccini had envisioned two operas—one tragic and the other comic—to contrast one another.⁴⁷ The idea to create a triptych grew as work on *Il tabarro* developed. The third was chosen to be of a religious or mystical nature, consistently distinctive in its story, but serving as a calmer movement between the progression of the three. Together they are unified by the themes of death and freedom from confinement.⁴⁸

Puccini became a leading figure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, composing in a time of transition for music in Italy and establishing himself as a serious composer of opera. In many ways he is considered to have been the successor of Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) and, believing it was his charge to compose solely for the theatre, he composed operas almost exclusively. As a result of his single-minded focus on the operatic genre, he has sometimes been considered less significant than those composers who, for instance, contributed also to the symphonic traditions.⁴⁹ Yet, of the twelve operas he composed, all but two are internationally revered and still widely performed including, *La bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900), *Madama Butterfly* (1904), *Gianni Schicchi* (1918), and *Turandot* (1926).

Born in Lucca, a small Tuscan city (famous for their exceptional olive oil), Puccini's family was well-respected as a musical dynasty, having seen five generations of composers and musicians. It was his family's hope that he, as the eldest son, would follow and surpass his ancestors as a musician.⁵⁰ After the death of his father at an early age, his mother, Albina, led the family and zealously oversaw Puccini's education. He studied the classics before beginning his studies in music (Albina felt this was important and "used to say: 'pure music, pure jackass.'" ⁵¹), but he did not start well as a student. He was known to have difficulty remaining seated for any length of time and was often expelled. His first music instructor was his uncle, Fortunato Magi, with whom he did not get along. He then studied with Carlo Angeloni and attended Lucca's Istituto Musicale Pacini. When Puccini was seventeen, his mother decided that it would be best for him to continue his studies away from Lucca and petitioned Queen Margherita di Savoia for the money needed for him to go to Milan to study at the Conservatory. He was successful, and in June 1883 he finished his studies and earned a diploma. Within a year he was able to make successful connections and his first opera, *Le Villi*, was performed and warmly received in Milan.

Thirty years later, Puccini had become the preeminent composer of opera in Italy, and both composer and country were experiencing dramatic shifts. The individuals whose roles had been pivotal in helping Puccini's career, including the publisher Giulio Ricordi, were dead. It was during the success of *La fanciulla del West* (*Girl of the Golden West*, 1910) and while in Paris for a premiere of the opera that Puccini is assumed to have come upon a play that incited his interest. Didier Gold's *La Houppelande* was the drama which would later become Puccini's *Il tabarro*, and the first one-act opera of *Il trittico*.

Giovacchino Forzano, who wrote the libretto for *Schicchi* and *Suor Angelica*, became a close colleague of Puccini during this later compositional period of his life. Forzano, who had been librettist to Mascagni as well, was also a playwright, critic, journalist, baritone, and later a stage and screen producer.⁵² He began his professional collaboration with Puccini; the composer was looking for new ideas on which to create the second and third parts of *Il trittico*. Forzano supplied two stories of his own creation—*Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*, the latter of which had been inspired by lines from the 30th canto of Dante's *Inferno*.⁵³ The plot upon which Forzano had built was actually taken from the "Commentary on the Divine Comedy by an Anonymous Florentine of the 14th Century," which had been published in 1866 and had expounded upon the story written by Dante Alighieri — also a Florentine.⁵⁴

Text and Translations

Lasciatemi morire!

Music by Claudio Monteverdi

Lasciatemi morire!
Lasciatemi morire!
E che volete che mi conforte
in così dura sorte,
in così gran martire?
Lasciatemi morire,
lasciatemi morire!

Text by Ottavio Rinuccini

"Porgi amor"

Music by W.A. Mozart

Porgi, amor, qualche ristoro
al mio duolo, a'miei sospir!
O mi rendi il mio tesoro,
o mi lacia almen morir.

Text by Lorenzo da Ponte

Almen se non poss'io

Music by Vincenzo Bellini

Almen se non poss'io
Seguir l'amato bene,
affetti del cor mio,
seguitelo per me

Già sempre a lui vicino
raccolti amor vi tiene
e insolito cammino
questo per voi non è.

Text by Pietro Metastasio

Let me die!

Let me die!
Let me die!
And what do you think will comfort me
in such terrible misfortune,
in such great anguish?
Let me die,
let me die!

Translation by Erin Rogers (2008)

Bestow, Love

Grant me, love, some consolation
for my sorrows and my sighs!
Either restore my treasured love to me,
or at least let me die.

Translation by Erin Rogers (2008)

At least if I am not able

At least, if I am not able
to follow my beloved,
the affections of my heart,
go with him for me.

Already near him always,
love keeps you gathered,
and the path to him is not
an unfamiliar one for you.

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after John Glenn Patton (2004)

Per pietà, bell'idol mio

Music by Vincenzo Bellini

Per pietà, bell'idol mio,
 non mi dir ch'io sono ingrato;
 infelice e sventurato
 abbastanza il Ciel mi fa.
 Se fedele a te son io,
 se mi struggo ai tuoi bei lumi,
 sallo amor, lo sanno i numi,
 il mio core, il tuo lo sa.
 Per pietà, bell'idol mio, ect.

Text by Pietro Metastasio

Ma rendi pur contento

Music by Vincenzo Bellini

Ma rendi pur contento
 della mia bella il core
 e ti perdono, amore,
 se lieto il mio non è.
 Gli affanni suoi pavento
 più degli affanni miei,
 perché più vivo in lei
 di quel ch'io vivo in me.

Text by Pietro Metastasio

Allerseelen

Music by Richard Strauss

Stell' auf dem Tisch die duftenden Reseden,
 Die letzten roten Aestern trag' herbei
 Und lass uns wieder von der Liebe reden,
 Wie einst im Mai.
 Gib mir die Hand,
 dass ich sie Heimlich drücke
 Und wenn man's sieht, mir ist es einerlei,
 Gib mir nur einen deiner süssen Blicke,

Have mercy, my fair beloved

Have mercy, my fair beloved,
 tell me not that I am ungrateful;
 Heaven is making me
 unhappy and unfortunate enough.
 That I am faithful to you,
 That I struggle under the gaze of your lovely eyes,
 love knows, the gods know,
 my heart and yours know it.
 Have mercy, my fair beloved, etc.

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Susannah Howe (2005)

But make my love's heart content

Do but make content
 the heart of my beautiful one
 and I shall forgive you, Love,
 though mine be not content.
 Her troubles I fear
 more than I fear my own,
 because I live more in her
 than I live in myself.

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Barbara Miller (2003)

All Souls [Day]

Lay on the table the fragrant mignonette,
 and the last red asters,
 and let us speak again of love,
 as once in May!
 Give me your hand,
 That I may press it secretly –
 and if anyone should see, I do not care.
 Give me one sweet glance,

Wie einst im Mai.

Es blüht und duftet heut' auf jedem Grabe,

Ein Tag im Jahr ist ja den Toten frei,

Komm an mein Herz,

dass ich dich wieder habe,

Wie einst im Mai.

Text by Hermann von Gilm zu Roseneegg

Die Nacht

Music by Richard Strauss

Aus dem Walde tritt die Nacht,
Aus den Bäumen schleicht sie leise,
Schaut sich um in weitem Kreise,
Nun gib acht.

Alle Lichter dieser Welt,
Alle Blumen, alle Farben
Löscht sie aus und stiehlt die Garben
Weg vom Feld.

Alles nimmt sie, was nur hold,
Nimmt das Silber weg des Stroms,
Nimmt vom Kupferdach des Doms
Weg das Gold.

Ausgeplündert steht der Strauch,
Rücke näher, Seel' an Seele;
O die Nacht, mir bangt, sie stehle
Dich mir auch.

Text by Hermann von Gilm zu Roseneegg

Zueignung

Music by Richard Strauss

Ja, du weisst es, teure Seele,
Dass ich fern von dir mich quäle,
Liebe macht die Herzen krank,

as once in May!

Today each grave is fragrant and blossoms with
flowers,

for one day in the year the dead are free.

Come to my heart,

that I again may hold you,

as once in May!

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Lois Phillips (1996)

Night

Night is creeping out of the wood,
stealing softly from the trees,
peering around in widening circles.
Now, take care!

She blots out light from all the earth:
all flowers, all colors;
and steals the sheaves
away from the field.

All that is far she takes way:
the silver from the stream,
and from the copper on the dome,
the gold.

Stripped stands the bush –
edge nearer, soul to soul!
Oh, I am afraid the night will steal
you from me, too.

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Lois Phillips (1996)

Dedication

Yes, you know, dear soul
that far from you I am tormented.
Love makes the heart sick – for this I

Habe Dank.

Einst hielt ich, der Freiheit Zecher,
Hoch den Amethysten-Becher
Und du segnestest den Trank,
Habe Dank.

Und beschworst darin die Bösen,
Bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
Heilig, heilig an's Herz dir sank,
Habe Dank!

Text by Hermann von Gilm zu Rosenegg

Ouvre tes yeux bleus

Music by Jules Massenet

(Lui)

Ouvre tes yeux bleus, ma mignonne:

Voici le jour!

Déjà la fauvette fredonne
un chant d'amour.

L'aurore épanuit la rose:

viens avec moi

Cueillir la marguerite éclore.

Réveille-toi! Réveille-toi!

Ouvre tes yeux bleus, ma mignonne:

Voici le jour!

(Elle)

A quoi bon contempler la terre

Et sa beauté?

L'amour est un plus doux mystère

Qu'un jour d'été;

C'est un moi que l'oiseau module

Un chant vainqueur,

Et le grand soleil qui nous brûle

Est dans mon cœur!

Text by Paul Robiquet

give thanks!

Once, reveler of freedom, I raised
high a goblet of amethyst,
and you blessed the draught – for this I
give thanks!

And you drove the evil away,
till I was purified as never before.
Holy, holy, I sank on your breast – for this I
give thanks!

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Lois Phillips (1996)

Open your blue eyes

(He)

Open your blue eyes, my darling:

the day has come!

Already the warbling bird sings
a song of love.

The dawn brings forth the rose:

come with me

to pick the blossoming daisy.

Awake! Awake!

Open your blue eyes, my darling:

the day has come!

(She)

What good is it to contemplate the earth

and its beauty?

Love is more a sweet mystery

than a summer day;

it is in myself that the bird is singing

his triumphant song,

and the great, burning sun

is in my heart!

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Grant A. Lewis (2003)

Élégie

Music by Jules Massenet

Ô, doux printemps d'autre fois,
vertes saisons,
Vous avez fui pour toujours!
Je ne vois plus le ciel bleu;
Je n'entends plus
les chants joyeux des oiseaux!

En emportant mon bonheur,
Ô bien-aimé, tu t'en es allé!
Et c'est en vain que revient le printemps!
Oui, sans retour,
avec toi, le gai soleil,
Les jours riants sont partis!

Comme en mon cœur
tout est sombre et glacé!
Tout est flétri! Pour toujours!

Text by Louis Gallet

Elegy

Oh sweet spring times of old,
green seasons,
you have fled forever!
I no longer see the blue sky;
I no longer hear
the joyful songs of the birds!

Taking my happiness with you,
oh beloved, you are gone!
It is in vain that the spring returns!
Yes, never to return with you,
the bright sun,
the days of happiness have fled!

How in my heart
all is somber and cold!
All is faded! Forever!

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Anne Evans (2003)

Romance

Music by Claude Debussy

L'âme évaporée et souffrante,
l'âme douce, l'âme odorante
des lys divins que j'ai cueillis
dans le jardin de ta pensée.
Où donc les vents l'ont-ils chassée,
Cette âme adorable des lys?

N'est-il plus un parfum qui reste
de la suavité céleste
des jours où tu m'enveloppais
d'une vapeur surnaturelle,
faite d'espoir, d'amour fidèle,
de béatitude et de paix?

Text by Paul Bourget

Romance

The vanishing and suffering soul,
the sweet soul, the fragrant soul
of the divine lilies that I have picked
in the garden of your thoughts.
Where have the winds chased it,
this charming soul of the lilies?

Is there no longer a perfume that remains
of the celestial sweetness
of the days when you enveloped me
in a supernatural haze,
made of hope, of faithful love,
of bliss and of peace?

Trans. by Erin Rogers (2008), after Korin Kornick (2002)

Polaroli, dedicated to Arthur Berger

Music by Irving Fine

Polaroli the polar bear,
he finds the cold so nice.
He loves to roll in the deepest snow
and sleep on a heap of ice.

In ice water he loves to swim
and splish and splash and splush,
and mush the cold snow under him
and snuggle in the slush.

His favorite dish is frozen fish,
with icicles and spicicles
and other little nicles
and that's his favorite dish.

And if he had his wish,
just one thing he would wish:
that all the world were made of snow
and ice and frozen fish.

Text by Gertrude Norman

Tigeroo, dedicated to Harold Shapero

Music by Irving Fine

There once was a tiger, named Tigeroo,
the hungriest tiger in the zoo.
All day long he liked to eat
not cake, not cookies, but only meat.

The keeper said, "Now Tigeroo,
you eat too much, you know you do.
If you eat anymore and you get sick,
I'll call the tiger-doctor quick."

"I'll eat all I like," said Tigeroo.
"I'm the hungriest tiger in the zoo.
You tell that doctor I said Pooh!
If he comes in my cage I'll eat him too."

Text by Gertrude Norman

Lenny the Leopard,
dedicated to Leonard Bernstein
Music by Irving Fine

Lenny the leopard hated his spots.
He covered them over with purple blots,
and tied his tail in a hundred knots.

He painted his ears, one red, one blue.
And dipped his nose in a pot of glue,
and ev'rything else bad leopards do.

But his mother said, "Lenny I still love you,
You're my baby and I love you."

Text by Gertrude Norman

"O mio babbino caro"
Music by Giacomo Puccini

O mio babbino caro,
mi piace, è bello, bello;
vo'andare in Porta Rossa
a comperar l'anello!

Sì, sì, ci voglio andare!
E se l'amassi indarno,
andrei sul Ponte Vecchio,
ma per buttarmi in Arno!

Mi struggo e mi tormento!
O Dio, vorrei morir!
Babbo, pietà, pietà!
Babbo, pietà, pietà!

Text by G. Forzano

O my dear daddy

O my dear daddy,
I love him, he is handsome;
I want to go to Porta Rossa
to buy the ring!

Yes, yes, I want to go there!
And if my love is in vain,
I will go to the Ponte Vecchio,
and throw myself in the Arno!

My struggle and my torment!
Oh God, I want to die!
Daddy, pity, pity!
Daddy, pity, pity!

Translation by Erin Rogers (2008)

Endnotes

I.

- ¹ Of the twenty-one dramatic works attributed to Monteverdi, only six survive in addition to the fragments which remain from *Arianna*. (Kobbé, Gustav. *The Definitive Kobbé's Opera Book*, ed. The Earl of Harewood. [New York: Putnam, 1987], 4.)
- ² *Monody*: music consisting of only one melodic line.
- ³ Donington, Robert. *The Rise of Opera*, 193.
- ⁴ Donington, 197.
- ⁵ His *Orfeo* of 1607, based on the myth of Orpheus, is often considered the landmark opera of this era and presents the earliest forerunner of the orchestra in an ensemble of instrumental players.
- ⁶ The group of artistic scholars and aristocrats which formed the Camerata began to meet in Florence at the end of the sixteenth century, continuing into the seventeenth century with adjustments to membership. Early members included Vincenzo Galilei (father of Galileo), Giulio Caccini, and Count Bardi, while Corsi, Peri, Rinuccini, and Monteverdi were among later members.
- ⁷ Grout, Donald J. and Hermione Weigel Williams. *A Short History of Opera*, 4th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 41.
- ⁸ This was a part of the soon-to-be-established tradition of endowments from ruling families and aristocracy for opera compositions, especially for the purpose of royal wedding festivities.
- ⁹ Donington, 193.

II.

- ¹⁰ Abert, Hermann. *W.A. Mozart*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 949.
- ¹¹ *Cavatina*: A type of aria in Italian opera which is simpler in form than that of the *da capo aria* and usually shorter in length. In early nineteenth-century Italian opera, specifically during the Bel Canto period, the *cavatina* became known as a principal singer's entrance aria. (*Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 4th ed., 163.)
- ¹² Abert, 949.
- ¹³ In the fifth act of Beaumarchais' play, from which this opera originated, Count Almaviva states, "Three years make a marriage so respectable," referring to his own marriage with the Countess. (Goldovsky and Schoep. *Bringing Soprano Arias to Life*, pg 109.)
- ¹⁴ Goldovsky, Boris and Arthur Schoep. *Bringing Soprano Arias to Life*. (New York: Schirmer, 1973), 109.
- ¹⁵ Abert, 923.
- ¹⁶ Tim Carter: 'da Ponte, Lorenzo,' *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 4 March 2008), <<http://www.grovemusic.com>>.
- ¹⁷ Abert, 805.

¹⁸ The tradition of *opera buffa*, or comic opera, had been based on stories of a popular nature and genesis, appealing most usually to the general public. Characters and plots were inspired or directly taken from *commedia dell'arte* scenarios, which featured stock characters, and the progress of the opera usually followed an established structure. The improvisatory Italian theatrical tradition of *commedia dell'arte* also found great success in Paris in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, leading to the absorption of its characters and scenarios into many aspects of French artistic and comedic expression. It is likely that Beaumarchais' plays were also directly or indirectly influenced by this Italian form of comedy. Mozart's portrayal of stock characters in his comic operas is more refined and complex, qualities of which were more commonly found in *opera seria*, or tragic opera.

¹⁹ Grout, Donald and Hermione Wiegel Williams. *A Short History of Opera*, 4th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 305.

III.

²⁰ Orrey, Leslie. *Bellini*. (London: Dent and Sons, 1969), 20, 25, 31.

IV.

²¹ Jefferson, Alan. *The Lieder of Richard Strauss*. (New York: Praeger, 1971), 119.

²² Jefferson, 24, 57.

²³ Petersen, Barbara A. *Ton und Wort: the Lieder of Richard Strauss*. (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1980), 11.

²⁴ Petersen, 11.

²⁵ Referring to Lassen's composition of 1886. (Jefferson, 125).

²⁶ Jefferson, 179.

²⁷ Jefferson, 98.

²⁸ Petersen, 13.

²⁹ Jefferson, 25.

V.

³⁰ Grout, 483.

³¹ Cooper, Martin. *French Music from the Death of Berlioz to the Death of Fauré*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 23.

³² Hugh Macdonald, et al. "Massenet, Jules." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. (Accessed March 15, 2008) <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51469>>.

³³ Cooper, 87.

VI.

³⁴ Ramey, Phillip. *Irving Fine: An American Composer in His Time*. (Pendragon Press and The Library of Congress, 2005), 305.

³⁵ Graddy, Julia H. *The Twentieth-Century Tribute in Solo Vocal Works: A Study of the Genre*. (Kansas City: University of Missouri-Kansas-City, 1995), 122.

³⁶ Graddy, 122.

- ³⁷ Ramey, 207.
³⁸ Manning, Jane. *New Vocal Repertory 2*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 53.
³⁹ Ramey, 207.
⁴⁰ Ramey, 207.
⁴¹ Ramey, 207.
⁴² Graddy, 131.

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- ⁴³ Kobbé, Gustav. *Kobbé's Opera Book*, ed. Earl of Harewood. (New York: Putnam, 1987), 974.
⁴⁴ Kobbé, 974.
⁴⁵ Kobbé, 975.
⁴⁶ Kobbé, 975.
⁴⁷ *Opera buffa*: Italian, meaning comic opera, it is "opera with humorous or lighthearted subject matter," frequently shorter, using music of "a more popular style," and involving "characters drawn from a wider social sphere than their more serious counterparts," as taken from the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 4th ed., 192-193.
⁴⁸ Budden, Julian. *Puccini: His Life and Works*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 405.
⁴⁹ Budden, 372.
⁵⁰ Freeman, John W. *The Metropolitan Opera Stories of the Great Operas*. (New York: Norton, 1984), 347.
⁵¹ Weaver, William and Simonetta Puccini. *The Puccini Companion*. (New York & London: Norton, 1994), 10.
⁵² Budden, 370.
⁵³ Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy, "The Inferno," Canto XXX*. Trans. by James Finn Cotter. (Accessed March 19, 2008). <<http://www.italianstudies.org/comedy/index.htm>>

But neither the Theban nor the Trojan wrath
 In ripping animals and human limbs
 Was ever seen so cruel against another

As the two shadows I saw, stripped and pallid,
 Biting and running in the selfsame way
 A hog behaves when let out of the sty.

One came straight at Capocchio and sank
 His tusks into his scruff and, dragging him,
 Scraped his stomach against the stony floor.

And the one left behind, the Aretine,
 Shivering said, "That ghoul is Gianni Schicchi,
 And he goes rabid, like that, mauling others."

"Oh," I said to him, "so may the other shade
Never sink teeth in you, kindly tell me
Who that one is before it rushes off."

And he told me, "That is the ancient spirit
Of Myrrha, the debased soul, who became,
Outside of rightful love, her father's friend.

"In this fashion she came to sin with him,
Pretending that her body was someone else's,
Just as the other ghoul who runs off there,

"That he might win the lady of the herd,
Disguised himself as Buoso Donati,
Writing a will to make the whole sham legal."

And when that raging pair had scurried off —
I'd kept my eyes glued on them long enough —
I turned to watch the rest of the ill-bred crew.

Artist Biographies

Soprano **Erin Rogers** has been studying applied voice at Sweet Briar College for four years and graduates this May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music. She is an Honors Degree candidate and has participated in the Honors Program since her first year at the College. Erin has been a member of Sweet Briar's Concert and Chamber Choirs, under the direction of Dr. Jonathan Green and Dr. Frank Archer, throughout her four years of study, and performed last December as a soloist with the Choir. She has had the opportunity to sing in the Randolph-Macon Women's College Opera Workshop of 2006 and in the Sweet Briar Opera Workshop of Spring 2007, where she performed scenes from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Così fan tutte*. After singing in Sweet Briar's production of Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* in Fall of 2006, she sang the lead role of Miss Todd, in Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief*, in March of 2007. Most recently, Erin performed classical and jazz songs in Sweet Briar's inaugural Fringe Festival, as well as the role of 'Sister' in *The Attack of the Elvis Impersonators*. Last summer, while studying music and Renaissance arts abroad in Italy, she had the unforgettable experience of singing as a soloist in two events of the Arezzo Festival, in Arezzo, Italy. She continued her studies in Bloomington, Indiana for the remainder of the summer, where she was able to work exclusively on her senior honors voice recital, both vocally and academically. Following graduation, she plans to continue her vocal and language studies while preparing for graduate auditions to voice and opera programs. Erin studied under Professor Emeritus Allen Huszti as a first-year student and has since been a student of Marcia Jones Thom.

Pianist **Anna Grazhdanova Billias** moved from Ukraine to the United States in February, 2006, and has quickly established herself as a much sought-after accompanist. Anna was trained as a concert pianist at the Prokofiev State Academy of Music in Donetsk, Ukraine (originally the Prokofiev Conservatory of Music), where she studied under Alexander Vitovsky, Yelena Trofymenko and Valeriy Semykin, and graduated with a master's degree in both performance and instruction for piano. Prior to attending the Conservatory, Anna was accepted to the advanced program for piano performance at the Donetsk Specialized School, and prior to the Specialized School, she spent seven years in the Donetsk Music School. During her school tenure, Anna performed with the school's symphony orchestra where she was a featured soloist and frequent accompanist. Anna was invited to perform in Paris, France, for the International Music Forum in the fall of 1997, where she played both contemporary and classical pieces from Russian and European composers, and was a prize winner in the Prokofiev International Piano Competition in 1995 where she competed against pianists from across Europe. Additionally, Anna was a frequent performer of solo and chamber music recitals in both Ukraine and Russia.

Anna is currently an accompanist at Sweet Briar College, at the Dance Theater of Lynchburg, and at the Christian Science Church of Lynchburg. She is the principal accompanist for the Cantate Choir of Lynchburg College. Since her arrival in Virginia in February, 2006, Anna has performed in concert at Hampden Sydney College, at Sweet Briar College with pianist Dr. Rebecca McCord, at Lynchburg College, in several local churches as a guest performer and vocalist, and as an adjunct choir member.

Jana Ross is concertmaster of Opera on the James, and principal second violinist of the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra and Opera Roanoke. She is also the violinist of the James Piano Quartet and frequently appears in concert at Sweet Briar College with her husband, pianist Nicholas Ross. Jana began her violin studies at the age of three in the St. Louis Conservatory and School for the Arts. She received her bachelor's degree from Oberlin Conservatory where she studied with Taras Gabora, and her master's degree at Rice University where her principal teacher was Sergiu Luca. She has participated in the Tanglewood and Aspen music festivals, as well as being concertmaster and soloist with the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge, Colorado. She has performed with numerous orchestras, including the Houston and Richmond Symphonies and was a tenured member of the Colorado Symphony for two years before moving to Lynchburg. Jana teaches at Sweet Briar College, Randolph College, and maintains a private studio in Lynchburg, Virginia.

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